

WASHINGTON CONSERVATION DISTRICT

FEBRUARY 8, 2023 BOARD MINUTES

APPROVED

CALL TO ORDER

The regular Board Meeting was called to order at 9:02a.m. by Chair, John Rheinberger.

Members Present: John Rheinberger, Chair
Tim Behrends, Vice Chair
Diane Blake, Treasurer
David Nuccio, Public Relations and Information

Staff Present: Jay Riggs
Shari Larkin

Other Agencies: Chris Schmidt, NRCS
Lizzie Dawson, NRCS

ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO AGENDA

An additional item (G) was added to New Business for the Peterson Audit Proposal. An additional item was also added to the Consent Agenda for the Chisago SWCD LSC Agreement, in the amount of \$5,948.29. A motion to approve the revised Agenda and Consent Agenda was made by Diane Blake, seconded by David Nuccio. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

Items to approve this month are the 2023 RCWD Inspection Services Amendment in the amount of \$40,500; the 2023 Hennepin County HMP Services Agreement in the amount of \$20,000; the FY22 BWSR Metro WBIF Mississippi East Hardwood Creek Agreement in the amount of \$257,796; and the Chisago SWCD LSC Amendment in the amount of \$5,948.29. A motion to approve the Consent Agenda was made by Tim Behrends, seconded by Diane Blake. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF JANUARY 11, 2023 BOARD MEETING MINUTES

A motion to approve the January 11, 2023 minutes was made by Diane Blake and seconded by Tim Behrends. Motion carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Items to note are Tom Furey in the amount of \$686.36 for a Water Stewards Grant expense; University of Minnesota in the amount of \$12,256.74 for the Agronomist position; Gary Swanson in the amount of \$10,000.00 for a FY21 BWSR LSC WBIF Grant expense; Jeff Keene in the amount of \$10,000.00 for a FY21 BWSR LSC WBIF Grant expense; Travis Swanson in the amount of \$10,000 for a FY21 BWSR LSC WBIF Grant expense; Bolton & Menk in the amount of \$1,000.00 for a Washington County Public Health expense; Minnesota Counties Intergovernmental Trust in the amount of \$28,019.00 for 2023 insurance; and Rhithron Associates, Inc. in the amount of \$5,155.00 for a CMSCWD water monitoring expense. A motion to approve the Treasurer's Report, subject to audit, was made by David Nuccio, seconded by Bob Rosenquist. Motion carried.

BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

Personnel – The Personnel Committee recommended approval of the 2023 salary adjustments.

Budget and Finance –

Cost-Share –

Communications and Outreach –

AGENCY / PARTNER REPORTS

County –

NRCS – The EQIP Assessment and Ranking deadline is Friday February 10, 2023. There has been exceptionally high interest in high tunnels, roughly 160 apps statewide- enough funding for ~30. The CSP application deadline is Friday February 10, 2023. There are currently seven for Washington County. IRA Funding announcement anticipated for February 14. The Local Work Group Meeting needs to be completed before July 21st.

BWSR –

MCD/Area IV –

Watersheds –

MASWCD –

EMPLOYEE REPORTS/PRESENTATIONS/INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

- a. **WCD and EMWREP Outreach** – *See Attached and Newspaper Article Binder.*
- b. **Presentation** – None this month

OLD BUSINESS

- a. **Office and Vehicles** – Jay will work with staff to discuss acquiring another used pickup to help with BMP Maintenance programs. Phone upgrades seem to be working,
- b. **Equity Initiatives** – Equity workshop is scheduled for next week to ID priority activities.
- c. **Program Updates** – Many new Urban Ag funding opportunities upcoming. Many items selling out for Tree Sale.
- d. **2023 Budget and Workplan** – No updates
- e. **DATC Prep** – Jay will be scheduling DATC meetings with legislators. Looking at Feb 17, March 2, March 3, and official DATC March 8th.

NEW BUSINESS

- a. **2023 Cost-Share Policy – Project Development** – The WCD needs to set labor, equipment, material, and service rates for project development. Based on conversations with neighboring SWCDs and comparison of neighboring SWCD 2023 cost share policy rates for project development, the WCD staff propose the following policy for 2023 Cost Share.

In-kind: Unless specified otherwise by Minnesota prevailing wage statutes, the value of labor, equipment, material, and or/services that are proposed to be provided by the applicant to complete the project, shall be estimated at:

- General Labor rate of \$30 per hour. Date, times, and activity must be documented.
- Labor rate of \$50 per cubic yard for concrete work.
- Heavy equipment operation such as skid steers, tractors, backhoes, and scrapers (including labor) at \$60 per hour. Date, times, and activity must be documented.
- Professional or semi-professional services, such as engineering, labor rate at \$75 per hour. Date, times, and activity must be documented.
- Other items: Fair market value with prior approval by the District Board.

A motion to approve the 2023 Cost Share Policy was made by Diane Blake, seconded by Tim Behrends. Motion carried.

- b. **WCD LSC CWF Soil Health Ag BMP Cost-Share Policy** – Lower St. Croix Watershed (LSCW) partners applied for and received a \$200,000 BWSR Clean Water Fund (CWF) Soil Health grant. The goal of the grant is to provide technical and financial assistance to agricultural landowners in vulnerable groundwater areas to increase long-term implementation of soil health practices where there are direct benefits to public water supplies. \$176,200 of the LSCW CWF Soil Health grant was allocated to cost share for soil health agricultural best management practices (BMPs) throughout the basin. Agricultural BMP cost share was divided to each participating SWCD based on the percentage of acres the LSCW encompasses; WCD was allocated \$65,100. Chisago SWCD is the Fiscal Agent for this grant, and approved a LSCW CWF Soil Health Agricultural BMP Cost Share Policy to maintain consistency throughout the basin. The Policy outlines the process for submitting project requests, processing applications, program requirements, cost share contracts, rates and general requirements, and project selection criteria (see attached). As stated in the Policy, “Districts wishing to utilize CWF Soil Health funds for implementing agricultural soil health BMPs will submit a project request form for the allocation of funding to the Fiscal Agent (Chisago SWCD), including local approved soil health agricultural BMP cost share policy and JAA with submittal.” WCD staff updated local agricultural BMP cost share policy to align with the LSC CWF Soil Health BMP Agricultural Cost Share Policy (see attached). The local policy has been reviewed and approved by BWSR, and needs to be approved by the WCD Board before submitting a project request form for the funding. The Policy does not include an individual contract cap; an acreage cap is included for conservation cover, conservation crop rotation, and forage and biomass planting. WCD Board should discuss whether to include an individual contract cap. Motion to approve WCD to submit project request form for \$65,100 by Tim Behrends, seconded by David Nuccio – approved unanimously. Second motion to approve WCD Manager to sign agreement with Fiscal Agent by Tim Behrends, seconded by Diane Blake – approved unanimously.
- c. **FY23 BWSR Soil Health Cost Share Grant and Policy** – Motion to approve Policy, made by David Nuccio, seconded by Diane Blake, approved.
- d. **EMWREP Stormwater Model Proposal** – Approval was requested to use unspent 2022 EMWREP funds to design and fabricate a new stormwater interactive display, spending up to \$10,000. A motion to approve spending up to \$10,000 for a new stormwater display was made by Tim Behrends, seconded by David Nuccio. Motion carried.
- e. **2023 PC Force IT Services Proposal** – The 2023 Maintenance Agreement was included in the packet. A motion to approve entering into the agreement with PC Force was made by Diane Blake, seconded by Tim Behrends. Motion carried.
- f. **WCD Regular Meeting Time** – This item is being tabled until next month, so Bob Rosenquist can be present for the discussion.
- g. **Peterson Audit Proposal** – Approval was requested for the 2022 audit to be performed by Peterson Company Ltd. The year-end audit fee will be \$4,800. A motion to approve entering into the agreement with Peterson Company was made by David Nuccio, seconded by Tim Behrends. Motion carried.

AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

None.

Diane Blake moved to adjourn the public meeting with the changed next meeting date (to accommodate DATC). Tim Behrends seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned at 10:27 a.m. The next scheduled meeting is March 14, 2023 at **9:00a.m.**

Secretary

Approved Date